

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 3604

DEPT REPEAT AS DESIRED

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PINS, PDIP, ASEC, ET, PLO
SUBJECT: PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATION IN ETHIOPIA

REF: ADDIS ABABA 3453 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY. A 3 MAN PFLP MISSION ARRIVED IN ADDIS ABABA AUGUST 15 TO SET UP A PERMANENT MISSION. ANOTHER, SO FAR UNIDENTIFIED, RADICAL PALESTINIAN GROUP IS ALSO EXPECTED IN THE NEAR FUTURE TO SET UP A PERMANENT MISSION. BOTH WILL UNDERMINE THE PRESENT PLO REPRESENTATION HERE AND ALL THREE ARE BEING USED BY THE ETHIOPIANS TO UNDERCUT ARAB SUPPORT FOR THE ERITREANS. THE RESIDENT PLO REPRESENTATIVE IS TOURING "PROGRESSIVE" AFRICAN COUNTRIES IN ORDER TO TRY TO GET THEM TO PRESSURE THE ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT TO WITHDRAW RECOGNITION FROM PALESTINIAN GROUPS OTHER THAN THE PLO. WE EXPECT HIS MISSION TO FAIL. END SUMMARY.

1. THE INFORMATION BELOW WAS PROVIDED TO US BY A RELIABLE ARAB COUNTRY DIPLOMAT WHO KNOWS KHEIRELDIN ABDELRAHMAN, THE RESIDENT PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION
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(PLO) REPRESENTATIVE IN ADDIS ABABA PERSONALLY.

2. THREE REPRESENTATIVES OF GEORGE HABASH'S IRAQI-SUPPORTED POPULAR FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF PALESTINE (PFLP) ARRIVED IN ADDIS ABABA ON AUGUST 15 TO SET UP A PERMANENT MISSION. OUR SOURCE DID NOT HAVE THEIR NAMES.

3. ANOTHER PALESTINIAN GROUP, POSSIBLY ONE SUPPORTED BY SYRIA, IS ALSO EXPECTED TO SET UP A PERMANENT MISSION IN ADDIS ABABA IN THE NEAR FUTURE. NO REPRESENTATIVES OF THIS GROUP HAVE YET ARRIVED AND OUR SOURCE DID NOT KNOW THE NAME OF THIS PALESTINIAN GROUP. HE CHARACTERIZED IT, HOWEVER, BASED ON INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO HIM, AS AMONG THE MOST RADICAL OF THE PALESTINIAN GROUPS NOT UNDER PLO CONTROL.

4. PLO REPRESENTATIVE KHEIRELDIN ABDELRAHMAN TOLD OUR SOURCE THAT HE WAS VERY DISCOURAGED WITH HIS MISSION HERE AND THAT HE AND THE PLO HAD BEEN "TAKEN" BY THE ETHIOPIANS. THE PLO REPRESENTATIVE'S MISSION GOT OFF TO A GOOD START FROM HIS POINT OF VIEW, AND THE PLO WAS TREATED LIKE AN EMBASSY BY THE ETHIOPIANS. NOW THAT THE PFLP, AND POSSIBLY YET ANOTHER PALESTINIAN GROUP, HAVE ALSO BEEN RECOGNIZED BY THE ETHIOPIANS KHEIRELDIN'S ROLE AS THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PALESTINIANS HAS BEEN SUBVERTED AND ANY EFFECTIVENESS HE MIGHT HAVE HAD IN ETHIOPIA OR WITH AFRICANS ACCREDITED TO THE OAU HAS BEEN NEUTRALIZED. HE WILL ALSO HAVE TO DEVOTE MORE ATTENTION TO HIS PERSONAL SECURITY.
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5. KHEIRELDIN HAS TEMPORARILY LEFT ADDIS ABABA FOR A TOUR OF SEVERAL "PROGRESSIVE" AFRICAN COUNTRIES, INCLUDING TANZANIA. HIS IMMEDIATE PURPOSE IS TO SOLICIT THE ASSISTANCE OF THESE "PROGRESSIVE" GOVERNMENTS TO APPLY PRESSURE ON THE ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT TO WITHDRAW RECOGNITION FROM OTHER PALESTINIAN GROUPS. HIS CHANCES OF GETTING THE ETHIOPIANS TO BACKTRACK, HOWEVER, ARE SLIM.

6. THE ETHIOPIAN PURPOSE FIRST IN RECOGNIZING THE PLO, AND THEN OTHER PALESTINIAN GROUPS, IS CLEARLY A DIPLOMATIC MOVE TO MAKE MORE DIFFICULT AND EMBARRASSING SUPPORT BY THE PALESTINIANS AND THEIR FOREIGN SPONSORS FOR THE ERITREAN SECESSION AND TO SOMALI IRREDENTISM IN THE OGADEN.
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